

Suggestions Sought for Book on Famous Western Oklahomans

01.13.2012

Students at Southwestern Oklahoma State University Sayre campus are working on a project involving an upcoming book on famous western Oklahomans.

The SWOSU students, under the guidance of English instructor Terry Ford, are looking for noteworthy Oklahomans and will be doing research papers on people who have had a significant part of western Oklahoma history.

Ford said the essays will be published in a book by famous writer/lawyer Bob Burke, who has authored many books about Oklahoma on such diverse topics as baseball, aviation and religion. His biography of Wiley Post and a book on the history of baseball in Oklahoma each have received awards from Oklahoma Center for the Book. His biography on Bryce Harlow was a Pulitzer Prize nominee and was named Oklahoma History Book of the Year by the Oklahoma Historical Society.

Nominations should be sent to Ford by calling 580.28-5527x152 or e-mailing her at terry.ford@swosu.edu with the subject line "Burke Book."

"We are including persons of acclaim from the past or present, dead or alive, and from all areas such as sports, business, politics, entertainment and more," Ford said.

The students have already completed essays on several stars, most of whom are from the Erick, Sayre, Elk City and Weatherford areas. Some of the people to be featured in the book include race-horse owner Walter Merrick, world champion boxer Jess Willard, singers ShebWooley and Roger Miller, Miss America Susan Powell, stars Joseph Benton and Kelli O'Hara and heroes such as Tom Stafford, Tommy Franks, Louis Sims and Donald Gott.

Ford said State Senator Tom Ivester, a native of western Oklahoma, suggested the project when he became acquainted with Burke. He noticed that most of the subjects of Burke's books were from the heavily populated north/central parts of the state and thought it would be nice recognition for western Oklahoma.